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## Burglary Prevention Tips

### **Barriers to burglary:**

Perhaps more than any other crime, burglary is a crime of opportunity. Burglars will aim for the easiest targets. Most will give up if they can't get in within a few minutes.

### **First Line of Defense:**

Burglars try the easiest entries first – doors and windows. If your doors or windows can't quickly open, chances are burglars will move on. Do not leave your doors and windows unlocked when away from home.

### **Doors:**

The best locks for your doors are deadbolts. The deadbolt lock should have a minimum of a one-inch throw bolt containing a hardened steel insert, which resists sawing. The strike plate should be attached to the doorframe with screws that measure four inches. Hollow core doors should be replaced with solid core doors or strengthened with metal sheets. Glass in a door should be unbreakable safety glass. Glass can also be protected with steel bars or mesh.

### **Hinges:**

If your doors swing out, the hinges are on the outside. A burglar can easily remove the hinge pins and lift the door out. To foil this, remove the center screw from each side of the hinge and insert a metal pin, or headless screw, on one side. This way even if the hinge pins are removed, the door will be bolted to the frame.

### **Windows:**

Use key locks on all of your windows and always keep them locked. Remember that even the best locks are useless if the window can be pried loose, or the frame is rotten. If you need ventilation, open the windows, but not wide enough to allow an average adult to climb through. To secure the windows at that level, drill a

slanted hole through the front window sash and part way through the back sash, and insert a heavy-duty nail or eyebolt through the hole.

**Lighting:**

Light may be one of the best crime deterrents. In fact, some states have minimum standards for exterior lighting. The rule of thumb is to light up all dark areas, especially doors and windows. Watch for shadows that can conceal a burglar's activity.

**Alarms:**

If you decide to install, or already have, an alarm, put warning signs in every window and at every possible entrance. Knowing that your residence or business is equipped with an alarm may be enough to deter some burglars. For best results, every alarm system should include:

A battery failsafe back up

Fire-sensing capability, and

Feedback device to check whether the system is working.

A reputable professional security consultant should conduct an expert appraisal of your security needs.

**Vacations:**

When you prepare to go on vacation, there are a few helpful reminders that will help reduce the risk of your advertising to others that there is nobody home at this residence. Put a hold on your newspaper delivery service. Have the post office hold your mail at their office for the period of time necessary. If you have timers set for lighting and sprinkler systems, try to set the times so they come on at different times. Tell a neighbor, or close friend, when you will be gone and return so that they can check the residence, or business, from time to time. Secure all of your doors and windows prior to leaving.

**Remember:**

Locks and alarms can't prevent burglary unless they are used. Establish a routine for "closing up shop", locking doors and windows, and setting alarms. Secure your residence when leaving and take a quick look around as you leave to see if you see anyone or anything unusual around the area.

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